

FALL 2019

Greenspace Planning Tool Ready

Municipalities and townships in the Oolentangy watershed have a new tool to help plan their development and greenspace. FLOW's Oolentangy Greenspace Plan provides maps and a GIS (Geographic Information Systems) database that identifies natural and developed resources.

It helps to answer questions like, "Where should we build? What should we protect? What areas are environmentally sensitive? Where should we link natural areas together?"

A greenspace is land that is largely in a natural state such as a woods or a butterfly garden in a yard.

The plan's goal is to identify existing greenspace, prioritize enough high-quality greenspace to take care of future population growth, and see how existing greenspaces can be linked together.

With the large projected increase in central Ohio population, and with only about half of the ideal greenspace even for the current population, these decisions will be critical so that the Oolentangy River is clean and healthy, and so that people living here have enough recreational and natural areas for a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle.

The GIS database allows the user to zoom in on areas of interest and see characteristics that they choose. For example, they might want to investigate the watershed characteristics for their home watershed by searching on their address, or look at a proposed development and its impacts on high quality potential greenspace.

Various overlays show information like agricultural areas, other green areas like lawns and recreation fields, tree canopy, waterway buffers, and distances between greenspaces.



GIS map of Henderson Road and SR 315 showing dark green Tier 1 (most critical environmentally sensitive areas to protect), light green Tier 3 (areas to improve) and a proposed development (marked with lines). The light green areas could be linked to each other for a possible greenspace corridor.

With the help of partners in Franklin and Delaware counties, the plan captured 22 variables such as existing wetlands, flood plains, and tributaries - all concerned with the natural environment.

FLOW will be contacting the municipalities and townships that they partnered with to familiarize them with the tool.

Municipalities and Townships wishing to request a printed map or a demonstration can email info@oolentangywatershed.org. The FLOW website (<https://www.oolentangywatershed.org/>) has additional information about the greenspace plan.

Anyone involved with acquisition or usage can access the GIS database at <https://green-space-project-oolentangy.hub.arcgis.com/>.

Winning the Invasives War at Perry and Snouffer Parks



The wooded strip dividing the baseball fields is Potters Creek and its surrounding trees, with Snouffer Road Park on the East and Perry Park on the West

Snouffer Road Park and Perry Park are separated by Potters Creek but you might not have known it until recently. The invasive honeysuckle surrounding it was so thick that you could not see through it.

The wall of honeysuckle separating the two parks is well on its way to being gone, thanks to the combined efforts of FLOW volunteers and the City of Worthington and its contractors.

Shawn Daugherty, Worthington's Parks Supervisor, describes his vision: higher-quality trees, native shrubs, paw paws, a pollinator garden, and unneeded turf replaced with wildflower and native grasses.

"With FLOW's help, we're off to a great start. FLOW has been an amazing partner with the project. We would not be able to do it without their help."

Deirdre Donaldson has been heading up FLOW's involvement in the project. "The stream and woods were not accessible at all," she says. "I did not know there was a stream there even though my kids have played there for years. There was a bridge that we did not know existed, and now it is usable. Now that the woods are clear of honeysuckle, I was excited to see kids putting up hammocks there."



Volunteers celebrating their victory over invasives.

Trees and Wildflowers

To increase diversity in vegetation, 1,000 trees and shrubs were planted this spring and 1,000 more will be planted next April.

A no-mow buffer with prairie grasses and wildflowers has been added along the edge of the woods. The hope is that it will flourish in the spring and filter the runoff from the parking lots and ball fields before it enters Potters Creek.



Success! Invasives gone and room for native plants to grow.

Deirdre's vision is that the stream water quality will be good. "We picked up all kinds of trash in the stream and are monitoring water quality. I also hope to see an increase in pollinators with the pollinator gardens. I'm looking forward to seeing what comes out in the spring. I have already seen some flowers come up on their own."

Volunteer Power

There has been an outpouring of volunteers, from the very first event, when 85 volunteers showed up. Throughout the project, volunteers have been area residents, staff from Columbia Gas and Battelle, and students from OSU, Thomas Worthington High School, and Olentangy schools.

According to Deirdre, "Every time I show up there with volunteers from different places, people stop and ask what we are doing, and they drop what they are doing and help. It has been really positive. I wish all projects could be like this."



Blue Heron Award

Danielle Johnson, vice president of FLOW, received the Green Heron Award from Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District. This recognizes her outstanding contributions to stream and natural resource protection in Franklin County.

FLOW IN ACTION

This year, 1735 FLOW volunteers:

- Planted 5,250 seedlings and 769 larger trees
- Cleared 592 bags of trash plus larger items during 21 watershed cleanups
- Monitored 14 streams
- Removed invasive vegetation at 16 events
- Offered 25 educational events

A few of these are pictured here.



Volunteers removed truckloads of trash from the Scioto River



Shade trees waiting final installation by FLOW volunteers at Winterset Elementary School



200 volunteers planted native vegetation at the West section of Carmack Woods on OSU's West campus



Little and big volunteers planted trees in Worthington's Park Avenue Park

Thanks to our Watershed Partners

Thanks to all of FLOW's watershed partners. Please consider visiting these businesses that help to support water quality where we live.

A special thanks to:

- **Seventh Sons Brewery** on N. Fourth St. for hosting a fundraiser and donating the proceeds from their own brewed FLOW lager. If you missed it, you should be able to buy a 6 pack at Weiland's Market, Krogers, or Giant Eagle.
- Those companies that donated raffle items for the fundraiser: **REI, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, Cliff Original, Watershed Distillery and Del-co Water**, which provided fire hydrants refurbished into an Ohio and a Minion theme.
- **Jason Kentner at the Olentangy River Visioning Project** for donating tee shirts to FLOW.
- **Columbus Foundation Green Fund** for donating money to plant 35 balled and burlapped trees at Columbus City Schools.
- **Green Columbus** for providing 170 containerized trees for our restoration at Carmack Woods.
- **NiSource** for donating \$5,000 for trees through their "Break a Bat" night at the Columbus Clippers. They will be working with FLOW to plant 57 trees this fall at Centennial High School.
- **REI** for their 6th Annual Grant to support trail stewardship in our watershed.
- **Weiland's Market** for donating some of the proceeds from their Party in the Parking Lot.
- **Those who donate to FLOW** directly or through workplace giving.
- **Those who donate to FLOW** through Kroger's Community Rewards and Amazon Smile programs. These give FLOW a percentage of eligible purchases at no cost to the shopper. Please see directions on the FLOW website for how to donate.
- **The many volunteers** who come to workdays and otherwise stand up for a clean environment in the Olentangy Watershed.

FLOW calendar of events

FLOW has a variety of activities throughout the year.

Please join in! Check FLOW's calendar at www.olentangywatershed.org or see the Facebook page: Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW).

FLOW events are also posted on the POINT volunteer app for Columbus.

Published By:
Chair – Kelly Thiel
Vice Chair – Danielle Johnson
Treasurer – George Williams
Secretary – Laura Fay
 Jim Palus
 Bob Campbell
 Deirdre Donaldson
 Amy Hill
 Gregg Peace
Newsletter: Lindalee Brownstein

Newsletter Layout:
 Ellie Nowels, Centipede Graphics
Contact FLOW
 3528 N. High St., Suite F, Columbus, OH
 43214
 614-267-3386 (phone)
 info@olentangywatershed.org
 www.olentangywatershed.org
Facebook group: Friends of the Lower
 Olentangy Watershed (FLOW)

Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed
 3528 N. High St., Suite F
 Columbus, OH 43214

Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed is a non-profit organization dedicated to keeping the Olentangy River clean and safe for all to enjoy through public education, volunteer activities, and coordination with local decision makers. FLOW is registered with the IRS as a tax-exempt, nonprofit charitable organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.

FLOW relies heavily on volunteer participation to create positive change in our watershed.

Please contact us for information on how you can volunteer. We have a wide variety of opportunities to fit your schedule and match your skills and interests. To be added to the FLOW email list, please send a request to info@olentangywatershed.org with a subject line of "Email list".



Free ways to Donate to FLOW



Kroger Plus Card

By registering your Kroger Plus card, you can help FLOW receive a donation of 5% of qualified purchases under the Kroger Community Rewards Program at no cost to you. Use your registered Kroger Plus card when shopping for each purchase to count. Go to www.kroger.com, select **Savings & Rewards**, and then **Kroger Community Rewards**. FLOW's new code is AU317.

AmazonSmile:

With AmazonSmile, you can donate to FLOW at no cost to yourself. Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> and search for Friends Of The Lower Olentangy.

Thereafter, start your Amazon sessions at <http://smile.amazon.com>.



One Little Thing

Most packaging waste in the U.S. is food packaging. Here are some easy ways to reduce this.

- Carry a travel cup in your car – you will even get a discount at some places.
- Get a bento box for lunches rather than over-packaged and over-priced prepared lunches.
- Microwave bulk popcorn in a plain paper bag, folded over. No oil needed, either.
- Buy refillable coffee pods instead of prefilled cups or pouches. You can use your own favorite coffee in them and save a lot.
- Buy food in boxes, glass, or cans instead of in plastic containers.
- Bring reusable containers and buy in the bulk aisle.
- Limit the use of plastic produce bags to those items that really need a bag. Reducing food packaging is one little thing we can do to help our planet.

